

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☒   
no ☐

Property Name: Mount Pleasant School Inventory Number: CARR-120  
Address: Littlestown Pike (MD 97) at Stone Road Historic district: yes ☒ no ☐  
City: Westminster, MD Zip Code: 21158 County: Carroll  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Littlestown  
Property Owner: Bs. Betty Bish Tax Account ID Number: 023133  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 461 Tax Map Number: 30  
Project: MD 97 at Stone Road Intersection Relocation Agency: FHWA-SHA-Carroll County  
Agency Prepared By: MD SHA  
Preparer's Name: Kathryn Barrett & Anne Bruder Date Prepared: 03/12/2012  
Documentation is presented in: Project Review and Compliance Files  
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended        Eligibility not recommended  
Criteria: X A        B X C        D Considerations:        A        B        C        D        E        F        G  
*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*  
Name of the District/Property: Mount Pleasant Survey District  
Inventory Number: CARR-1714 Eligible:        yes        no        Listed:        yes        no         
Site visit by MHT Staff        yes        no X Name:        Date:       

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

**Description**

Facing Stone Road at the intersection with MD 97, the Mt. Pleasant School provides architectural evidence of the historic Mt. Pleasant cross-roads community. Constructed between 1856-1860, the small one-story building is one bay wide and three bays long with three, six-over-six double sash wood windows on both long sides, and two windows flanking the front door on the façade. Wood lintels with square block end caps support the brickwork over the window openings. A brick interior chimney flue rises from the front-gable roof on the north (back) side of the building. A wooden bell cupola straddles the ridge of the medium pitched, standing seam metal roof above the building entrance. The bell has since been removed. Mirroring the main gable roof, a smaller gable roof supported by square wood posts provides shelter to the school house entrance. Wooden steps lead to a wood plank landing in front of the multi-paneled wood door. The gable of the porch roof is clad in aluminum siding. The front door surround features simple pilasters supporting an inverted ogee molded lintel.

The brickwork of the building consists of a common-bond composition. The building also features a corbelled cornice on the slope sides, and a corbelled chimney cap. The school house is supported on rubble-stone foundation walls. A rectangular, cement keystone is located under the front gable, though no date is visible.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended ☐  
Criteria: X A        B X C        D Considerations:        A        B        C        D        E        F        G

**MHT Comments:**

*Jim Starnes*  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

*[Signature]*  
Reviewer, National Register Program

4/19/2012

Date

4/20/12

Date

**Historic Context**

The property is located along the 18th-century Baltimore to Gettysburg route known as MD 97 or the Westminster-Littlestown Pike. Situated between the county seat of Westminster and Union Mills, the small crossroads town of Mt. Pleasant provided a convenient stopping point along the busy turnpike and Stone Road (a county road). Mt. Pleasant was the name of an original land patent and was likely named for its location atop Parr's Ridge, a small mountain ridge that runs along MD 97 north of Westminster. MD 97 was originally a privately-owned branch of the Baltimore and Reisterstown Turnpike, established during the 1808-1815 time-period. The road has several names, often referencing the route from Baltimore to Littlestown, or points in between. The nearest toll gate for the turnpike was located just south of Union Mills and north of Mt. Pleasant.

Established as a separate county in 1836, the 456 square miles of Maryland's Piedmont region that composes Carroll County was once part of Frederick County. Settlement in the area began in the 1720s when English settlers, followed by Scottish, Irish and German immigrants, sought religious tolerance and natural resources. Abundant fertile soils and water resources facilitated settlement in the region. Many German immigrants came south from original settlements in Pennsylvania, bringing with them traditional building and agricultural practices, and accounted for a significant portion of Maryland's population by 1756 (Weeks, p.7). By 1764, the town of Westminster, approximately two miles south of the school house, became a prosperous community supported by local mills, farms and stage coach stops. Early agriculture in the region was primarily focused on tobacco, though cultivation efforts quickly switched to grain as more German farmers moved to the area. Following the Civil War, farms decreased in size and industries arose such as canneries and dairies. Millers and quarry operators took advantage of the abundance of chestnut wood and stone. By 1852, the Western Maryland Railroad Company was formed, and subsequently established a line through Westminster by 1861, significantly boosting the canning and shipping industry in this agricultural community.

Situated on the border between the Myers District (District 3) and the Westminster District (District 7), Mt. Pleasant quickly developed as a convenient stopping point between Westminster, Union Mills and Taneytown. By 1862, Mt. Pleasant featured the Sam Bowers Hotel, a couple stores, a black smith shop, and a school house, several residences clustered along MD 97, mills, quarries, and farms (Martenet Map 1862).

Prior to the state requiring county public schools, Carroll County families educated their children in a system of private and parochial schools, and a few public schools. In 1849, Carroll County passed an act establishing public primary schools and dividing the limited state funds amongst the districts according to school-age population (MHT CARR-1267). In 1853, Jacob Merring sold a 32-piece of land to the Trustees of School District Number 6 for the "express purpose of erecting a primary school thereon (Weeks, p.129)." Located on West Main Street, this school is the earliest documented public school building in Westminster. Teachers were required to be single; to attend to the students from 9 a.m. until about 4 p.m., or when the classroom was clear of students and cleaned for the next day; to serve a 10-month term; and to provide for or prepare lunch for the entire class (Zillox, 2007 website). By the 1860s, many rural communities of Carroll County constructed and populated small school houses centrally located to neighboring farms. Many of these buildings are described as one-room buildings, with at least three windows on both long sides, with a pot-belly stove for warmth and a blackboard along the back wall.

In 1856, John and Elizabeth Crouse and Alfred and Mary Amelia Bish donated a small parcel of land at the northwest corner of MD 97 and Stone Road, the center of the Mt. Pleasant community, to the Trustees of the Mt. Pleasant School House Lot. The Trustees were listed as J. Henry Hoppe, Samuel Lauver and Owen Bankert (Land Records JBB I9, f.44). Constructed soon after this land donation, the Mt. Pleasant School served the small, but growing community. At the time, a blacksmith shop and general store were located across Stone Road from the school house, and another store was adjacent to the school house on John Crouse's property. The brick school house is very similar to others built in the county, such as the Springdale and Frizzelleburg school houses, which both remain extant today. These school houses are also brick construction, one-room, three bays long with a front porch and school bell cupola on the roof ridge.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

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MHT Comments:

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

In 1864, the state of Maryland passed a law requiring a state public school system. One year later, Carroll County responded with the establishment of the Carroll County School Commissioners, which would later become the Carroll County Board of Education. The Commissioners initially rented privately-owned school buildings, and later purchased many of the buildings. Teachers in the early public schools earned a base salary of \$50 per year (Weeks, p.130). By 1866 Carroll County had 70 schools, 74 teachers and 3,109 students for the fall term. In 1880, the county had 125 schools (32 frame, 63 brick, 18 log and 2 stone), 131 teachers and 6,454 students and three separate schools for African-American children (Weeks, p.131). The 1881-82 Mt. Pleasant School Trustees were John Crouse, Frank Burgoon and John C. Bankert, and C.H. Bixler was the teacher for 43 pupils (Sharf, p.243). John Crouse lived on the adjacent property, and Frank Burgoon lived across Stone Road from the school. John Bankert was also a local resident of Mt. Pleasant. During the late 19th century, the county replaced frame or log school houses with more substantial brick buildings, though continuing with the one-room plan design. In 1881, Carroll County had more than 100 schools, operating in churches, homes and designated school houses.

In 1910, Ms. Airy Crouse (later Airy Bish), age 22, taught school at the Mt. Pleasant School house, and lived with her parents Abraham and Elizabeth and brother Oliver in the house located adjacent to the school lot. The house and school were built on the farmland once belonging to Airy's grandfather, John Crouse (Ms. Betty Bish, February 2008).

As population increased at the turn of the century, these small scattered school houses were no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the growing community. The first quarter of the 20th century, the county consolidated many of the small schools to provide better facilities and higher-paid teachers to the educational system. School laws in 1911 and 1916 raised standards on school attendance and the education of teachers, raised teacher's salaries, provided for the education of handicapped children and required African-American students to spend as much time in school as white students (Brugger, p.454). In 1916, Maurice H. Unger became the superintendent of schools for Carroll County where he implemented the Rural Reorganization Plan to consolidate schools. In 1920, Carroll County owned 125 schools, and rented fourteen additional buildings. Of these buildings, 107 schools only had one teacher. The 1920 county school population included 6,852 elementary students, of which 456 were African-American. The recorded high school population was 571, all of whom were white students. Local elementary students learned arithmetic, reading, spelling and English and were tested annually (Graybeal: 1995).

On November 19, 1926, the Board of Education of Carroll County advertised the public sale of school property in the local paper, the Democratic Advocate. The advertisement noted the sale of fifteen brick and one wood school house, including the Mt. Pleasant School, in good condition, some (such as the Mt. Pleasant School) with new metal roofs. The Mt. Pleasant School was advertised on 27 square perches of land. By 1928, 24 one-room school houses closed and seven new consolidated schools opened (Warner, p.166). The Equalization Act of 1922 also created a general state education fund from which all counties could draw funds from and beginning in 1928, the state required all children to complete primary school (Brugger, p. 456, 493). Following the sale of the Mt. Pleasant School in 1927 from the Carroll County Board of Education to William and Airy Bish on for \$530, the children of the Mt. Pleasant community moved to the Charles Carroll Elementary School (Land Records E.M.M. 148, page 289).

The school house building and parcel, which was donated in part by Airy Bish's grandfather, John Crouse, 71-years ago was now returned to the family parcel, adjacent to the Bish's house built in 1913 by John Crouse's son, Abraham. Today the school house building is used as storage, though an original blackboard remains intact along the back wall.

#### Significance

Constructed in the 1850s, the Mt. Pleasant School marks the crossroads of the small Mt. Pleasant community. This property is directly associated with the events and trends that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the local history of Mt. Pleasant and Carroll County, thus qualifying it for eligibility under Criterion A. The property is not associated with any person

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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Date

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Reviewer, National Register Program

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Date

or group of persons of outstanding importance to the community, state, or nation. Therefore, the school is not eligible under Criterion B. The building embodies distinctive characteristics of mid-19th century, rural educational architecture, and is an excellent example of a brick one-room school house in Carroll County.

The brick building retains a high degree of integrity of materials, design, and workmanship. The building remains in the original location on land that was donated by local families, and retains the feeling, association and setting of a small community. Positioned in the center of Mt. Pleasant, the school house distinguishes the area as a rural community. As the community formed along the Littlestown Turnpike, the school house's position along this route is consistent with the historic development of the area. Outbuildings, such as a privy, no longer remain on the property and it is not clear what the original landscaping consisted of, with the exception of two mature trees currently adjacent to the building. However, the surrounding properties and farmland support the historic feeling and association of the school that once housed children who lived on these farms. The school is therefore considered eligible under Criterion C. The Mt. Pleasant School was not evaluated under Criterion D. Therefore, it has been recommended that the Mt. Pleasant School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C.

As the school house is located very close to the road and the site lacks associated outbuildings or landscaping features, the historic boundary of the property is defined as the boundaries of Carroll County Tax Map 30, Parcel No. 461 (2012) in the amount of 0.125 acres.

#### Sources Consulted:

- Brugger, Robert. Maryland, A Middle Temperament. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.  
 Graybeal, Jay A. Back to School in 1920. Carroll County Times, August 27, 1995.  
 Hollifield, William. Difficulties Made Easy: History of the Turnpikes of Baltimore City and Baltimore County, Baltimore County Historical Society, 1978.  
 Martenet, S.J. Martenet's Map of Carroll County, Maryland, Simon J. Martenet Surveyor & Civil Engineer, Baltimore, MD, 1862.  
 Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form for the Hampstead School (CARR-1267).  
 Prall, Joan. Schoolbells and Slates. Westminster, MD: Historical Society of Carroll County, 1990.  
 Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Western Maryland, Volume II, 1882. Reprint. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1968.  
 Warner, Nancy M. et al. Carroll County Maryland. Westminster, MD: Carroll County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.  
 Weeks, Christopher. The Buildings of Westminster in Maryland, Fishergate Publishing Company, Inc., Annapolis, MD. 1979.  
 Zillox, Julie. <http://somdthisisliving.somd.com/vol9num1/history-of-public-education.html>  
 Carroll County Land Records  
 JBB 19, page 44, John and Elizabeth Crouse and Alfred and Amelia Bish (Grantors) to the Trustees of the Mt. Pleasant School House Lot (Grantees), March 3, 1856.  
 E.M.M. 148, page 289, Carroll County Board of Education (Grantors) to William and Airy Bish (Grantees), January 4, 1927.

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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MHT Comments:

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 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

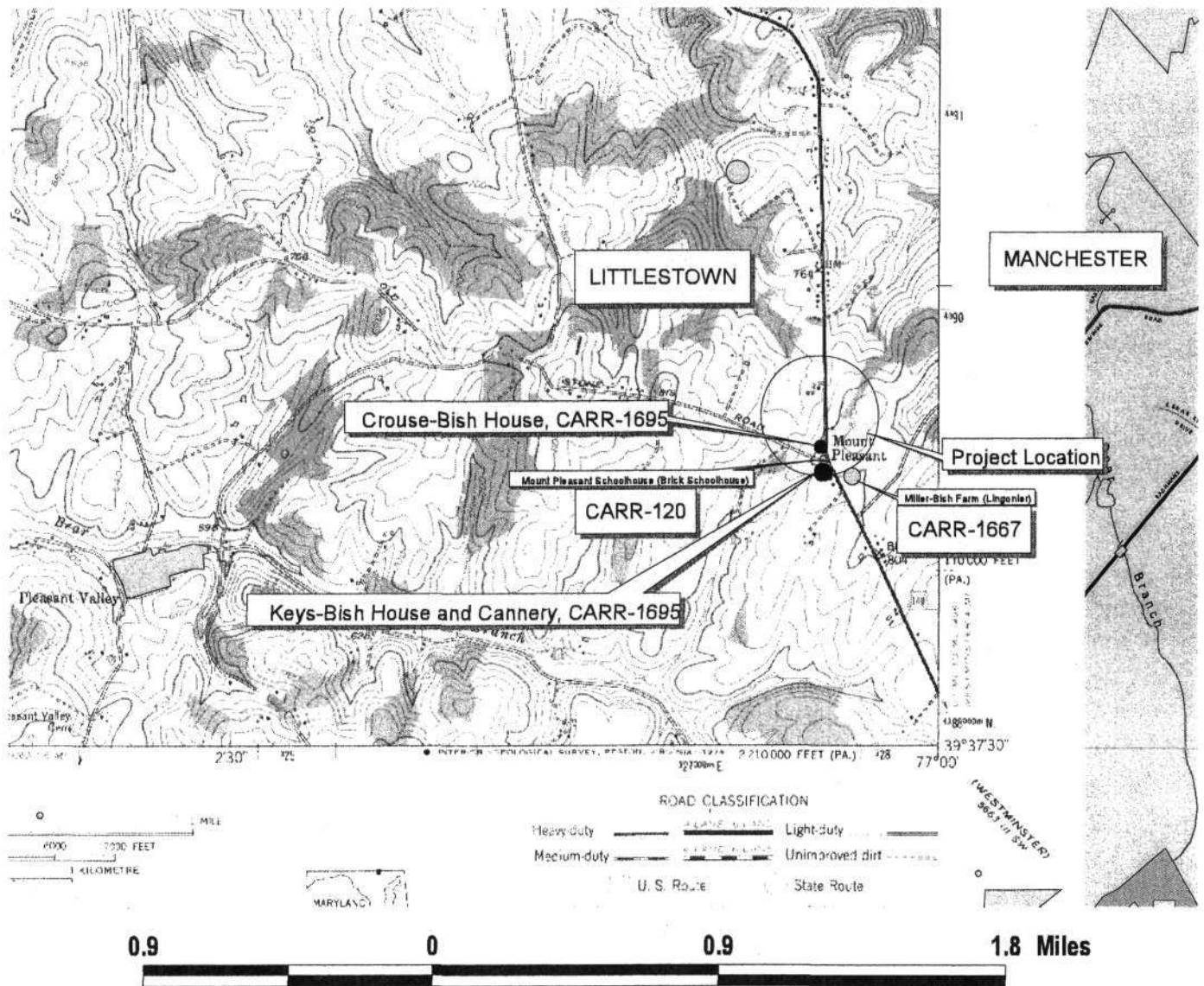
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 Reviewer, National Register Program

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 Date



## Resource Location Map on USGS Littlestown Quad





Carr - 120

Mt. Pleasant School

Carroll County, MD

SHA

January 2008

MD SHPO

View of the front facade looking North.





Carr-120

Mt. Pleasant School

Carroll County, MD

SHA

January 2008

MD SHPO

View of the east elevation and back (north)  
elevation.

2/12

1. STATE Md  
COUNTY Carroll  
~~TOWN~~ Westminster VICINITY Mt. Pleasant  
STREET NO.

ORIGINAL OWNER  
ORIGINAL USE  
PRESENT OWNER  
PRESENT USE  
WALL CONSTRUCTION  
NO. OF STORIES

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
INVENTORY

2. NAME Brick Schoolhouse  
DATE OR PERIOD Mid. 19th.  
STYLE  
ARCHITECT  
BUILDER

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION

OPEN TO PUBLIC

Corner of Stone Road + U.S. 140  
NOW 97, LITTLE TOWN PIKE



Westminster

Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse on Martinet's 1862  
ON LITTLE TOWN USGS QUADRANGLE

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE

Endangered

Interior

Exterior



6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

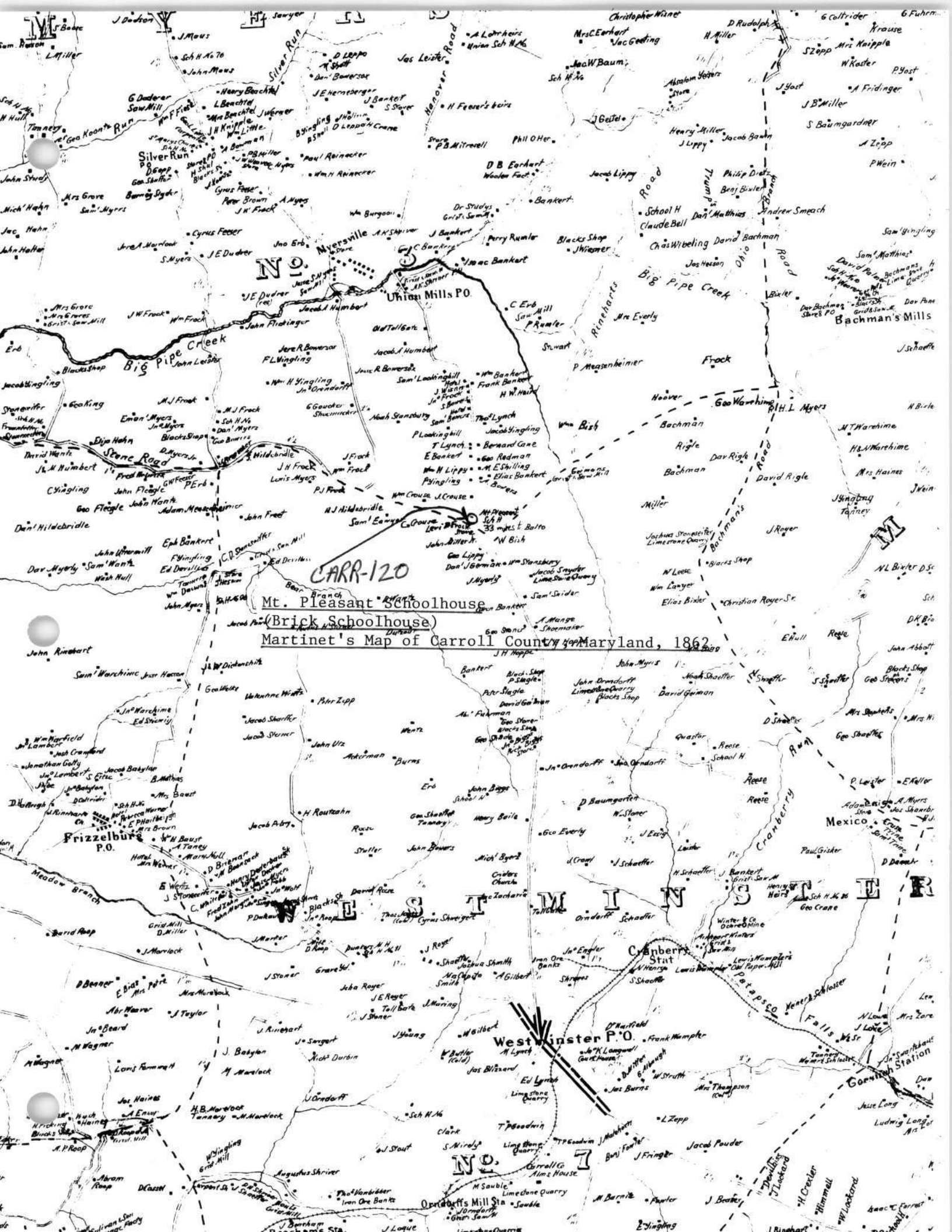
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)  
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER

Tworog, J.R. MHT

1/71

DATE OF RECORD



N

CARR-120

Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse  
(Brick Schoolhouse)

Martinet's Map of Carroll County, Maryland, 1862

E S T M I N S T E R

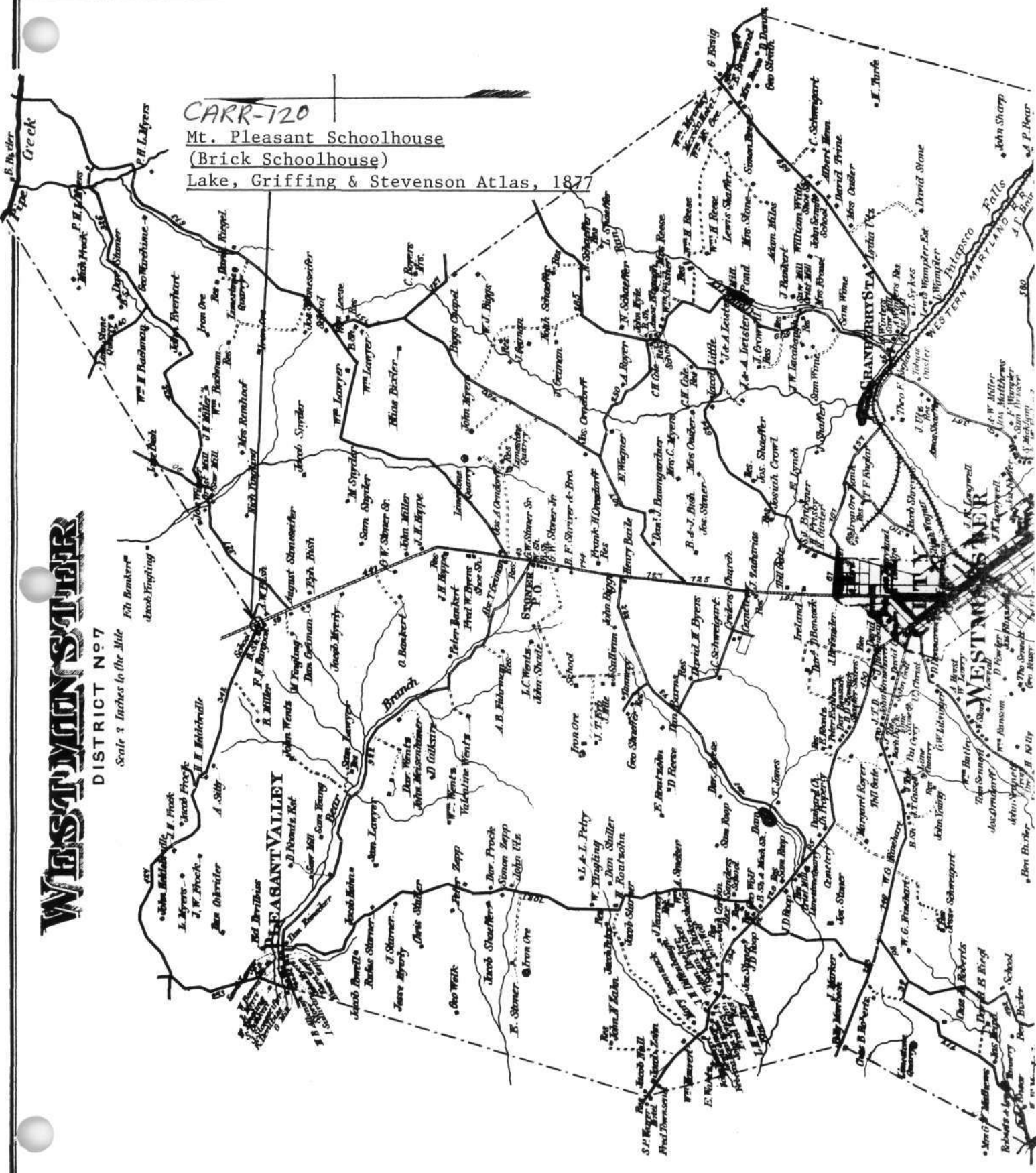
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7

# WESTMEN'S ATLAS

DISTRICT NO 7

Scale 3 Inches to the Mile



CARR-120  
Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse  
(Brick Schoolhouse)  
Lake, Griffing & Stevenson Atlas, 1877

PLEASANT VALLEY

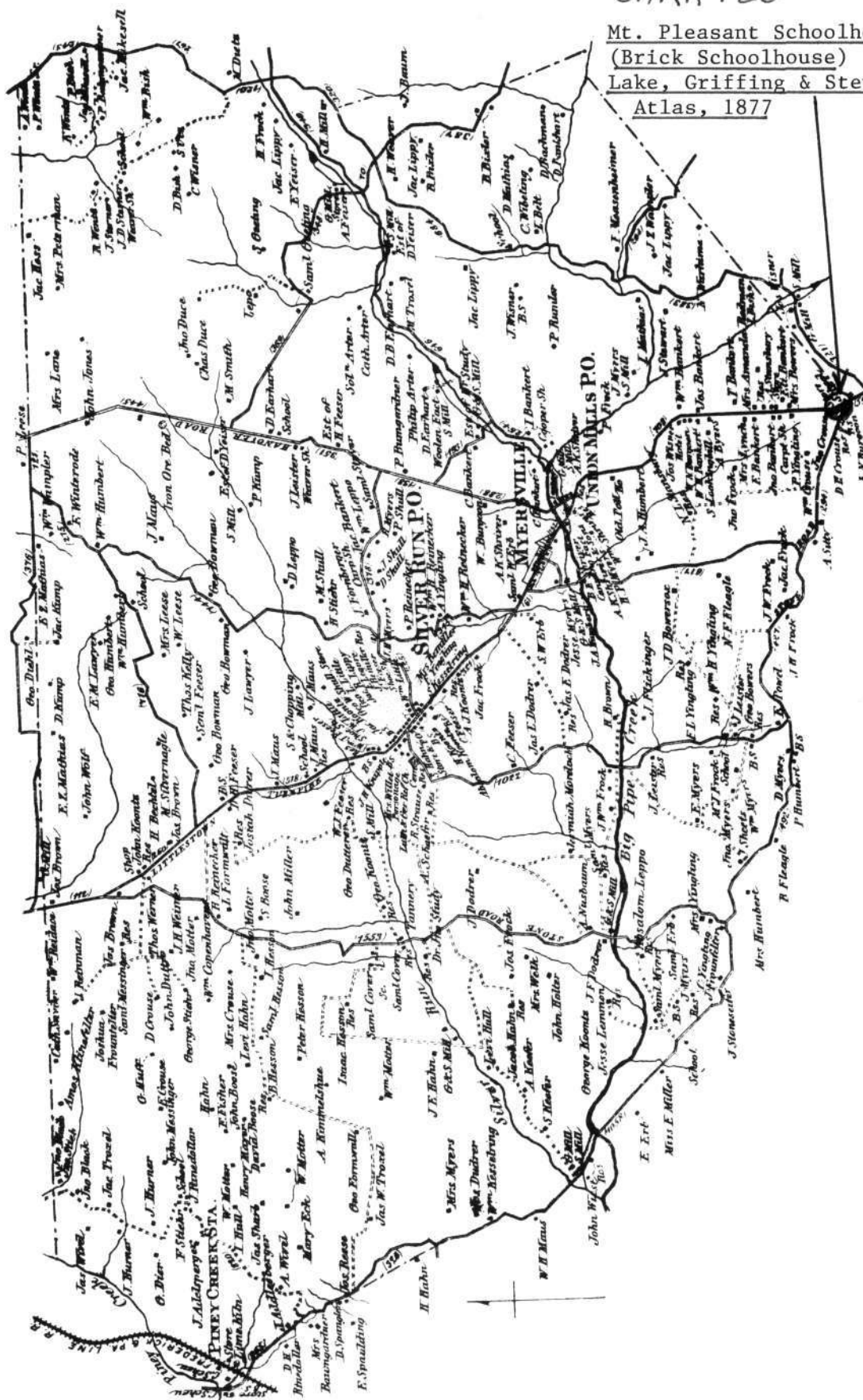
WESTMEN'S



# MYERS

DISTRICT N°3

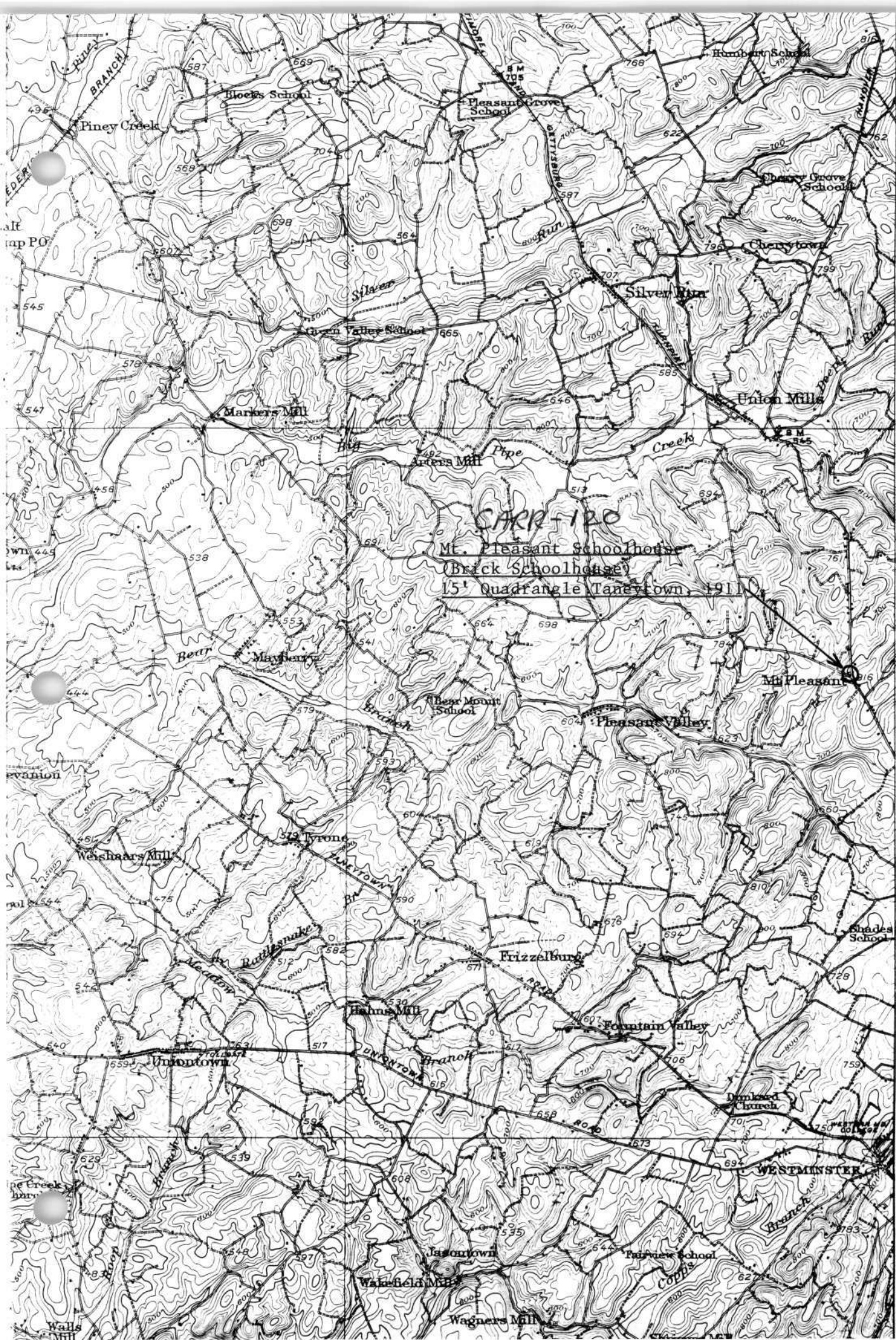
Scale 11 inches to the Mile



CARR-120

Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse  
(Brick Schoolhouse)  
Lake, Griffing & Stevenson  
Atlas, 1877

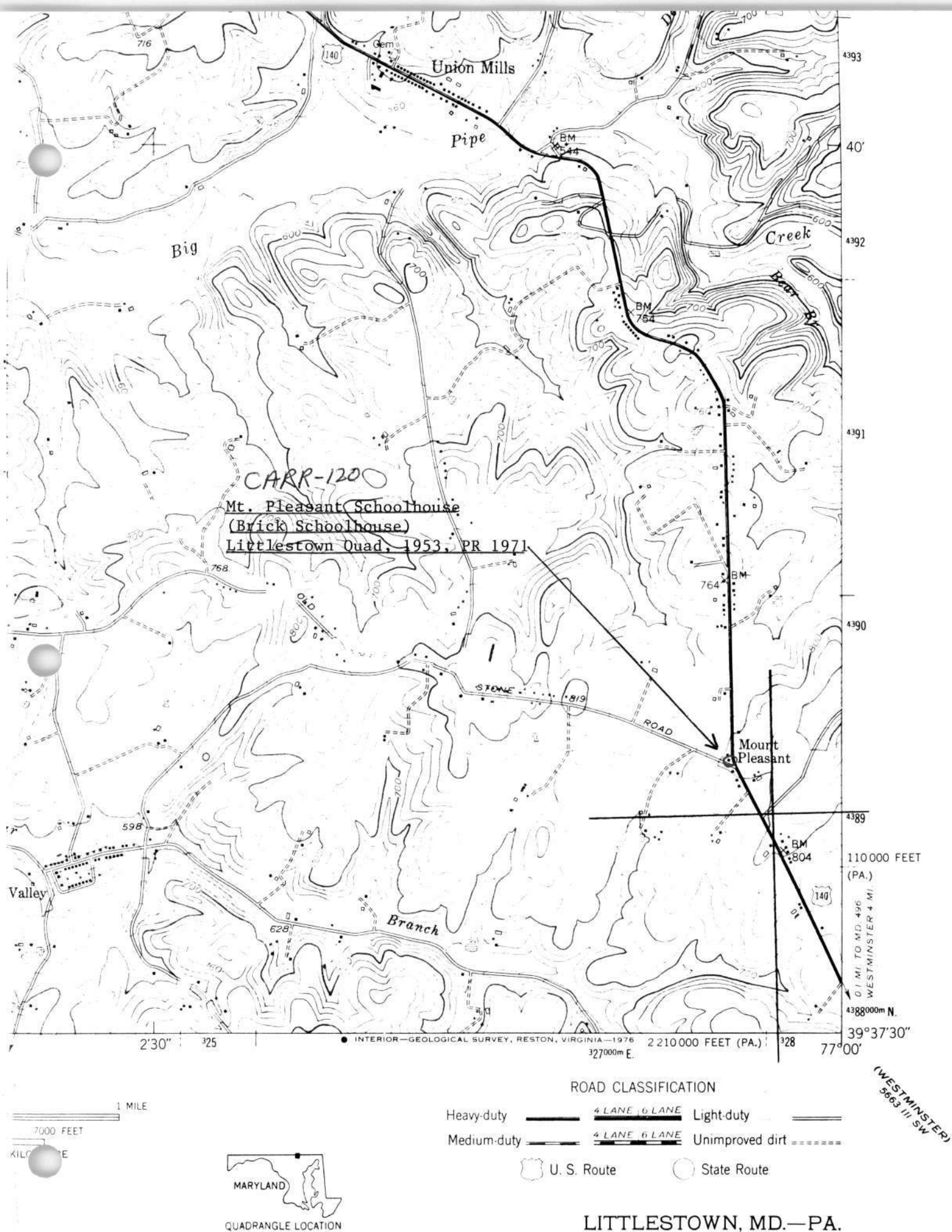




CARR-120  
Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse  
(Brick Schoolhouse)  
15' Quadrangle Taneytown, 1911

(Westminister)

13  
12  
11  
10  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3





CARR-120

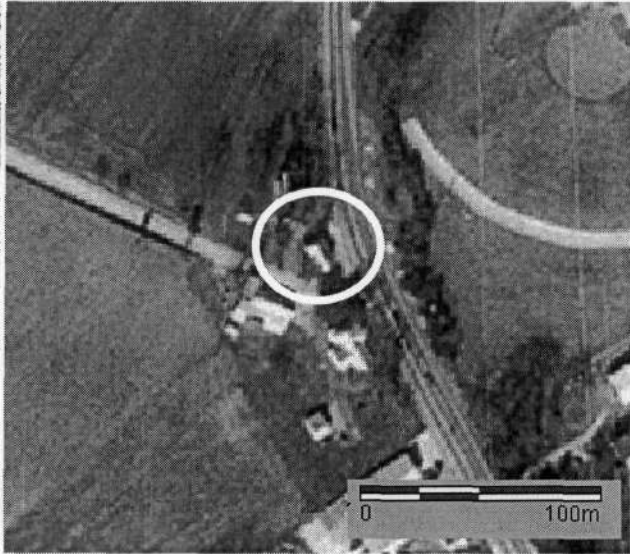
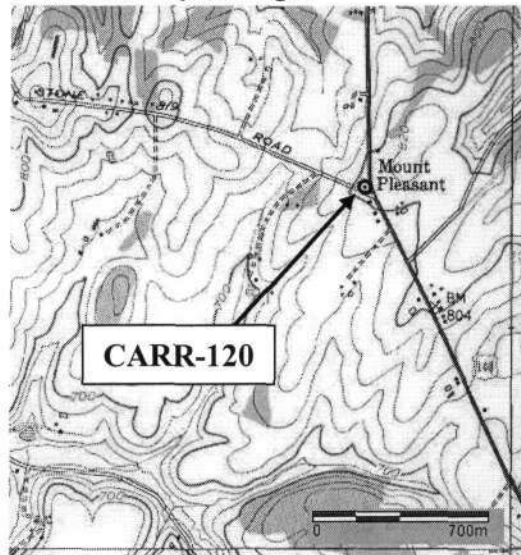
Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse

(Brick Schoolhouse)

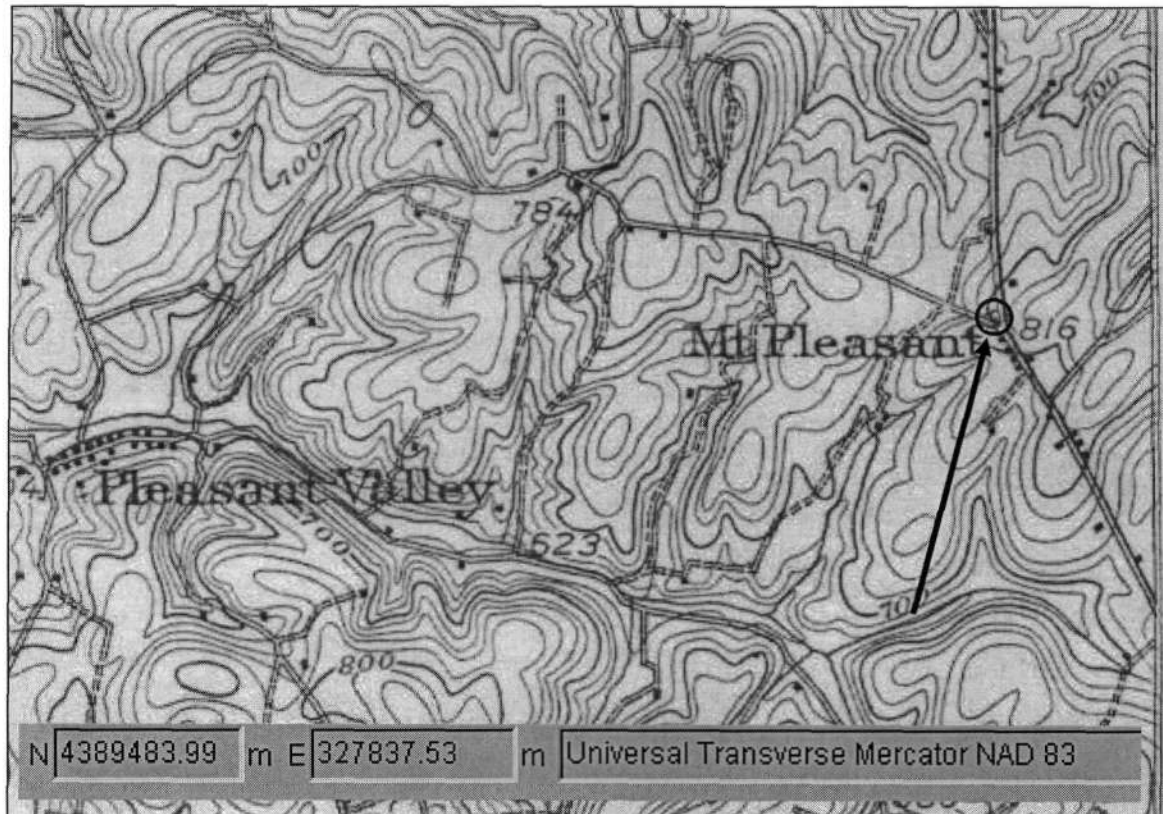
Littlestown Pike (MD 97, formerly US 140) & Stone Road

Littlestown Quadrangle

1998 Aerial Photo



USGS Taneytown 15' quad, 1911



N 4389483.99 m E 327837.53 m Universal Transverse Mercator NAD 83



C 155 Westminster, Canada  
Brick Schoolhouse. CARK-120

Schoolhouse

frame # /